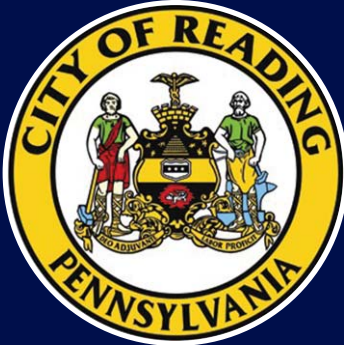


# City of Reading, PA

## Managing Director



Neher &  
Associates®



# The City of Reading

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Reading are seeking an innovative, experienced Managing Director to help manage the day-to-day affairs of this community of about 82,000 citizens. Initially incorporated as a borough in 1783, Reading became a city in 1847, and now ranks as the fifth largest city in Pennsylvania and the sixth largest municipality.

The City of Reading is the county seat of Berks County, Pennsylvania and the center of the Greater Reading Area. The City covers just under ten-square miles in southeastern Pennsylvania and is largely bounded on the west by the Schuylkill River, on the east by Mount Penn, and on the south by Neversink Mountain. Reading is approximately one and one-half hours from Philadelphia and two and one-half hours from New York (by auto). The City lent its name to the now-defunct Reading Railroad, which brought anthracite coal from the Pennsylvania Coal Regions. The railroad is one of four railroad properties in the classic English-language version of the Monopoly board game.

Reading was one of the first localities where outlet shopping became a tourist industry. The City's cultural institutions include the Reading Symphony Orchestra and its education project Reading Symphony Youth Orchestra, the Goggle Works Gallery, the Reading Public Museum and the Historic Society of Berks County. The Reading Pagoda, located atop Mount Penn, is also a popular recreational stop for tourists and residents and is the most visited attraction in Berks County. Residents also enjoy a variety of choices of outdoor activities and sports including the Reading Phillies (a double-A Eastern League baseball team), the Reading Royals (East Coast Hockey League Ice Hockey team), the Reading Express (an American Indoor Football League team), Reading United (Soccer), and Reading Buccaneers (Drum and Bugle Corps). Reading has more than six million visitors annually.

Five institutions of higher education are also located in Reading: Albright College, Alvernia College, Berks Technical Institute, Pace Institute, and the Reading Community College. The federal and state highways system allow good entry and egress to and from Reading and airline service is provided by the Reading Regional Airport (general aviation) with commercial service being provided with a short drive to Harrisburg International Airport, Lehigh Valley International Airport, and the Philadelphia International Airport.

In December, 2007, NBC's Today show featured Reading as one of the top four "Up and Coming Neighborhoods" in the United States as showing potential for a real estate boom based on areas for big change, renovations, cleanups of parks, waterfronts, and warehouses. The reviewer also noted Reading's proximity to Philadelphia, New York and other cities. Today the overall community offers a wide range of housing from extremely modest to luxurious homes.

The City of Reading operates under a Home Rule Charter with a strong Mayor form of government. The new form of government was approved by voter referendum on November 7, 1993 and began in 1996. The Mayor is elected at large for a four year term and is accountable for the executive branch of City Government. There are also seven members of the City Council, six of whom are elected by districts and one (the Council President) is elected at large. The Council serves in overlapping four-year terms. The current Mayor is Thomas

McMahon and the Council President is Vaughn Spencer. The Mayor is the Chief Executive Officer of the City and is responsible for enforcement of the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the ordinances of the City of Reading. He/she also has the authority to appoint all Department Directors with the confirmation of the City Council. The City Council is charged with the responsibility of developing legislative initiatives and budget priorities. It also oversees the performance of the management of the government to improve delivery and outcomes and monitors spending to ensure compliance with the approved budgets and financial plans of the City.

The City of Reading was designated a financially distressed municipality under Pennsylvania's Financially Distressed Municipalities Act, also known as "Act 47," on November 12, 2009. Act 47 provides for the restructuring of debt of financially distressed municipalities; allows for the levying of taxes not normally authorized and/or at rates above statutory maximums, provides for an outside consultant to review the municipalities finances, prepare a recovery plan, and give assistance in the implementation of the recovery plan; authorizes municipalities to participate in Federal debt adjustment actions; and provides for consolidation or merger of contiguous municipalities to relieve financial distress.

Public Financial Management in Philadelphia was assigned to prepare Reading's recovery plan and after much Community, City, County, and Commonwealth input, the final version of the recovery plan was adopted by City Council on June 11, 2010.

The mission of the City is to "Provide responsive dynamic government in a way that will enhance the quality of life for everyone in our community." The City's vision statement goes on to elaborate that "The City of Reading puts people first realizing we are all part of the renaissance of our community so that Reading becomes the most desirable small city in Pennsylvania." The Mayor and City Council are proud of the efforts of key City Management and staff to continue to improve the quality of services and professionalism of the City staff, and also value involvement and interaction with the community.

## The Position

The Managing Director is the professional Chief Administrative Officer for the City of Reading and is responsible to the Mayor for the administration of all City affairs placed in the Managing Director's charge pursuant to the Home Rule Charter of the City of Reading. Appointed by the Mayor with approval of the City Council, the Managing Director is the senior executive and administrative position in the City government. He/she is responsible for executing the policies established by the Mayor and Reading City Council

The Managing Director manages the Department Heads and the leadership of major City functions. The City of Reading has a 2010 adopted expense budget of approximately \$120 million including a \$64 million general fund budget and three enterprise funds. Approved staffing for 2010 is 656 employees.

The Management team reporting directly to the Managing Director is the Director of Community Development, Chief of Police, Chief of Fire and Rescue Services, Director of Administrative Services, Director of Public Works, Director of the Reading Public Library, Executive Director of the Human Relations Commission, Business Analyst and



an Administrative Assistant. The Executive Director of the Reading Redevelopment Authority and Executive Director of the Reading Parking Authority report to the Mayor as does the City Solicitor who also reports to the City Council. The City Clerk and Executive Director of the Reading Water Authority report to the City Council. There is also a City Auditor.

The Mayor and City Council set City policy and look to the Managing Director to execute that policy and provide professional feedback, input and advice. The Managing Director also provides leadership to City staff to meet the goals and objectives of the Mayor and Council. The successful candidate will have strong team building, leadership, financial/budgeting, and communication and public relations skills, as well as the ability to work well with the community.

In general, the Managing Director is responsible (under policy direction of the Mayor) for planning, directing, organizing and controlling the activities of City departments/agencies through Department Directors and other key management staff. Typical duties and responsibilities of the position include:

- Directs and supervises the administration of all departments, offices and agencies of the City except as otherwise provided by Charter or City ordinance.
- Attends as requested City Council and Committee meetings and takes an active role in providing information and recommendations.
- Works closely with the Mayor and City Council Members to ensure that the policy decisions are implemented efficiently and assists the Mayor and Council in establishing goal priorities, strategies and timelines.
- Prepares and submits to the Mayor a proposed annual budget and capital program, and directs ongoing financial and budget analysis including recommending appropriate action to ensure financial stability.
- Submits to the Mayor and City Council a complete report of the finances and administrative activities of the City within thirty days at the end of each fiscal year.
- Prepares a five-year financial plan and budget.
- Helps to identify revenue sources to fund new and existing programs and ensures that the City financial systems are adequate to protect assets, create an adequate balance between expenses and expenditures/assets, allow for timely reporting of financial data, and meet all local, state, and Federal legal and regulatory requirements.
- Oversees personnel policies, supervises and directs the negotiation and administration of any collective bargaining agreements, administers labor relations, reviews any and all disciplinary actions prior to appeal or arbitration process, and assesses staffing levels and effectiveness.
- Ensures equal opportunity, fairness and consistency in the expenditure of public monies and in all recruitment, selection, hiring,

and promotions, and selects, directs and evaluates key department heads and other executive staff.

- Coordinates City activities with other governmental and outside organizations and works with community groups regarding community affairs and interests in City services to strengthen neighborhoods, improve quality of life, City services and infrastructure, and respond to the diverse needs of the community.
- Working with appropriate City staff, advances the City's technology capabilities to increase operational effectiveness, cost savings, and access to reliable and timely information.
- Promotes the City's mission through continuous quality improvement, best practices, good staff training and support, and clear communications.
- Works closely with Police, Fire and other agencies and departments to help ensure public protection and safety.
- Assumes other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Mayor.

## Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities

Challenges/opportunities include:

- Encouraging and fostering effective communication and relationships with City Management and staff, Community, City Council and Mayor, and involve representatives of the community in partnership with the Mayor, the City Council and Administrative staff to create an atmosphere and action plan(s) to decrease crime, provide a high quality of life and increased economic opportunities.
- Revitalization and redevelopment of the Reading Downtown area, riverfront development, and business development and retention.
- Addressing major capital improvement needs in wastewater treatment and sewer plant renovations.
- Reviewing and addressing housing at all levels of affordability.
- Response, follow-up, and implementation of the Act 47 Municipal Financial Recovery Program including such items/issues as Financial Tracking, Process Improvement, Community Development Department Integration, Improving the Downtown Streetscape, Strengthening Neighborhoods, Implementing Comprehensive Planning in Target Neighborhoods, Working with Peer Cities, Legislative Action, Economic Development (job development), establishing a Citizens Service Center and more.
- The changing demographic within Reading due to a growing Latino population and the need to make sure the City reflects those changes.
- Other challenges and opportunities include continuing to maintain high professional standards of the City and City staff in the face of potential personnel freezes or cut backs through attrition as a result of current revenue shifts.



# The Candidate

## Education and Experience

- Possession of a four-year college or university undergraduate degree with major course work in public administration, business administration, finance, or a closely related field, supplemented by graduate courses specializing in public management (a Master's Degree is preferred) and
- Ten years of experience in executive or administrative positions with a minimum of five years of strong management preferably as a Chief Administrative Officer, Managing Director, City/Town/Village Manager, Assistant/Deputy Manager or similar level executive management position.

## Knowledge, Skills and Abilities

The successful candidate should have strong leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills as well as solid presentation and organizational abilities. This person should also have knowledge/skills in:

- The principles and practices of public administration.
- A hands-on understanding of municipal government or other organizations of similar complexity.
- Public management practices including finance, human resources, labor negotiation, planning, economic development, community relations, organization management, and communications.
- Budget preparation and control.

In addition, he/she should be able to:

- Work effectively in an environment with diverse ethnicity and interests.
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with a wide variety of people, including members of the public, staff and colleagues, the Mayor, City Council and other elected and appointed officials.

## Management Style and Personal Traits

The successful candidate will be someone who enjoys a challenge, is articulate and a strong yet inclusive leader. He/she should also be credible with staff and the community, be politically astute, approachable, and comfortable in a diverse, complex municipal organization, as well as interact well with the Mayor, City Council, colleagues and community in a professional and collegial manner.

The person should be forward thinking, a good strategic planner who is people friendly, communicates well verbally and in written form, and is comfortable in expressing their opinion and providing

professional advice when needed. He/She should be confident and self-assured with good comprehension of financial and operational management, a strong customer service orientation, and a comfort level with an engaged Mayor, City Council and Community.

The selected individual must also have a high degree of integrity, be a good listener, be facilitative, believe in the mission and goals of good municipal government, as well as transparency in government. He/She should be open and flexible, be firm when needed, able to lead, direct, and delegate effectively, seek innovation and champion good ideas. He/She should also be a strong decision maker and team builder.

Finally, the person selected should truly enjoy the complexities of local municipal government. Ideally, he/she should have experience working in a distressed city and is aware and capable of leading the recovery of a distressed city. He/She should be an advocate for quality service and accountability, not be risk averse, provide good follow-through, build strong relationships/partnerships and be able to approach challenges and situations with professionalism, confidence, flexibility, energy and a positive outlook.

## Compensation

The salary range for this position is currently \$90,000 to \$110,000. The City of Reading also offers a competitive fringe benefits package. Details are available upon request. The successful candidate will be required to establish residency in the City of Reading within twelve months of appointment.

## How to Apply

If you are interested in this outstanding opportunity, please submit a detailed resume as soon as possible to:

Robert Neher, Jr., President or  
Lawrence Davenport, D.Ed., Executive Vice President

### Neher & Associates

299 Westlake Drive  
Suite 200  
West Sacramento, CA 95605  
Telephone: (916) 443-2421  
Facsimile: (916) 443-5949

Applications are preferred electronically to:  
robertneher@executivesearchneher.com

Should you have any questions with regard to your own interest, or a recommendation of a colleague, please contact us at the numbers above. Leading candidate applications will likely be reviewed with the City in late December to early January.

**An Equal Opportunity/AA Employer.**

